

18 July 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

FROM: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: The DCI's Role in Warning and Crisis

REFERENCE: Report on the DCI's Role in Warning and Crisis,
dated 22 June 1978

1. I've read the comprehensive report which Dick Lehman and his committee have produced. Although conducted by civilians, it is a fine example of military "completed staff work." By this I mean that it provides the decision-maker only three options: (1) accept the recommendations; (2) reject the recommendations; or (3) contrive his own modification to the recommendations. Essentially I have long felt this kind of military staff work in effect deprives the decision-maker of his opportunity to make decisions in favor of his staff.

2. What I would like to see in this and other such formulations is a series of alternatives between which we can exercise a decision-maker's judgment. What I think is needed is a statement of what steps need to be accomplished in order to provide adequate warning, and what alternative ways are there to fulfill such steps? It appears to me that this paper starts with the conclusions and then describes how most of them are justified (not all -- some are just stated). Moreover, although there are a number of complex diagrams about previous organizational arrangements, I found it difficult to gain any flavor of whether we are just revisiting past mistakes or likely to be improving. It would be helpful if, after outlining what steps are necessary to provide good warning, the report could describe how previous organizational arrangements have attempted to fulfill the requirements.

3. What concerns me in large part is that the report appears to support the continuation of every warning activity presently in being and to mandate some additional organizational structures. This bears all the earmarks of a bureaucratic compromise where nobody loses anything and where no organizations are eliminated

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and new ones are established. I have not been able to come up with my own modifications of this proposed plan, but I am most wary of establishing a new full-time staff and a new committee. If what they are both intended to do in essence is to get the NIOs to do a better job of being sensitive to warning and to looking at unexpected possibilities rather than accepting only the traditional wisdoms, why shouldn't we charge Bob Bowie with accomplishing that? It would benefit his organization in so many other ways if he did.

4. In a year and a half I have not seen anything come out of the Strategic Warning Staff that seems to warrant its existence. Perhaps it is playing a catalytic role that it is difficult to perceive. My one visit to it frankly left me unimpressed that there was any systematic approach to analyzing the warning situation. I question whether we should continue the three-year experiment for another year and one-half just to find out if it will work.

5. The material is probably all here. I would ask you to have Dick restructure it so that we have a better idea of what choices we are making.

[Redacted Signature Box]

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